What is SUN Online?
SUN Online is a post-secondary online course sharing system that has been initiated by a consortium of New Mexico public community colleges and universities.

How did SUN Online come to be?
SUN Online is a component of The New Mexico Skill UP Network (SUN), a project funded by a Department of Labor Trade Adjustment Assistance Community College Training (TAACCCT) grant. Santa Fe Community College is the lead institution of a consortium of New Mexico community colleges, universities and the Higher Education Department. The obligation of TAACCT grantees is to institute effective innovations that

- Accelerate Progress for Low-Skilled and Other Workers
- Improve Retention and Achievement Rates and/or Reduce Time to Completion
- Build Programs That Meet Industry Needs, Including Developing Career Pathways
- Strengthen Technology-Enabled Learning

How does SUN Online work?
The SUN Online course sharing system enables participating institutions to share ‘seats’ in designated online courses. It is based on a Home/Provider model. The Home Institution is where the student is enrolled. The Provider Institution is the school that is providing the course and the instructor. The Home Institution enters the providing institution’s course in its own schedule, and the student enrolls in the course from his/her home institution. Because students are registered at their Home Institution, the Home Institution receives the appropriate formula funding. Similarly, the Provider Institution receives formula funding for the same course—for only its own registered students. The adopting institution pays the providing institution a fee for the seats it has purchased. The SUN Online administrative system tracks these transactions.

- Each course seat provided by a college to another participating college in the system receives one positive credit for each credit offered and adopted.
- Each course seat adopted from another participating college is assessed a charge for each credit received. A standard three credit course will be worth three positive credits for the providing institution and three negative credits for the borrowing institution.

SUN Online will commence with a Phase 1 in spring, 2013, among 7 institutions offering a limited number of courses. College presidents from those institutions have signed MOUs.

What is the Return on Investment that SUN Online will realize for higher education in New Mexico and how will students benefit?
- There will be less duplication of courses, resources and programs. For example, institutions can offer seats in courses that traditionally don’t fill to capacity. Two or more colleges can agree to offer just one course.
- SUN Online institutions are adopting Quality Matters, a faculty-centered, peer review process that is designed to certify the quality of online courses, which will ensure excellence and consistency in online learning in New Mexico.
- SUN Online will result in increased responsiveness and reduced time-to-market for local and regional training needs.
- Students will have access to more certificate- and degree-required courses which will increase student retention and reduce time to completion.
- SUN Online will increase collaboration between institutions.

How will SUN Online sustain itself?
The New Mexico Skill UP Network is funded by the Department of Labor through September of 2014, and rigorous evaluation is required. If the SUN Online model proves successful, a representative SUN Online Council is meeting regularly and will seek alternative funding or determine an annual fee structure to meet the costs of SUN Online administration and to establish that revenue for fees is generated through the savings colleges realize with the seat bank sharing system.